



ard of Cooperative Educational Services
October 5, 2015

Dear Ms. Peritz:

SEMARY KENNEDY
HOOL

A meeting was held today with you; Robert Dreaper, Union Representative; Janet Weisel, Assistant Coordinator OT/PT services; Barbara Longo, Supervisor; and me, Bonnie Heller, Principal of RKS to discuss your professional conduct.

S LOWER
ELEMENTARY AND
MIDDLE SCHOOL
ISSUES

BONNIE HELLER
PRINCIPAL
6) 396-2600
ler@nasboces.org

BRA CICCARELLI
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
[carelli@nasboces.org](mailto:cicarelli@nasboces.org)

HIGH SCHOOL
DISTRICT-BASED
ISSUES

MICARELLO
PRINCIPAL
6) 396-2600
mello@nasboces.org

THEW ZEGERS
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
zegers@nasboces.org

We discussed concerns that were raised by a teacher and a teacher aide regarding your interactions with students at the Rosemary Kennedy School. Specifically, not following behavior intervention plans (BIPs), not holding students' hands while transitioning through the hallway, giving the impression of being fearful by not engaging with the students, not establishing behavioral control during a treatment session and not appropriately utilizing a one-to-one aide. In addition, during an observation, it was observed by Janet Weisel that you were not providing adequate therapy.

Two staff members reported that you were reluctant to hold a student's hands when transitioning to an occupational therapy session; you were not following the BIPs for your assigned students and appeared fearful of the students. During our meeting, you stated that you read "20" BIPs and then your caseload was changed necessitating reading "20" additional BIPs, so that you did not know what each BIP stated. It is my understanding that only 3 of the students on your current Rosemary Kennedy School caseload and 5 of the students on your CCA caseload have BIPs. This discrepancy brings into question the information that you provided regarding the BIPs.

You also stated that you were being cautious about holding the student's hand, as you did not want the student to pull on your arm. Additionally, you stated that the aide in that particular room does not like you and has made inappropriate comments to you such as, "If you can't do your job, you should not work here." You acknowledged that you did not at any time report this to either Ms. Heller or Mr. Picarello. The staff members also reported that you were reluctant to interact with the students. You stated that you were not fearful of your students. Ms. Longo directed you to communicate concerns with staff members to either Ms. Heller or Mr. Picarello in a timely manner.

You were observed by your supervisor, Janet Weisel, on September 30, 2015. The session involved a student from the RKS high school program. You acknowledged that the session where you were observed was problematic, but noted that the student had been sleeping prior to the session. During the session, you were observed presenting a number of activities to the student. The student promptly pushed each item away. You made no attempt to gain instructional control. At one point, the student removed his shoes and socks. Again, you did not attempt to stop him and did not exert instructional control. It was observed that you did not provide therapeutic input or instruction and you allowed the student to take over control of the session. When questioned by Ms.

Weisel about the student's BIP, you responded that you did not know what the behavior plan entailed. You responded that you have twenty years of experience. You described your work history as including working with students similar to those attending RKS.

During the course of the meeting, you referenced the medical accommodations put into place at a meeting on September 11, 2015 where your accommodation request was to avoid lifting more than 10 pounds. At our meeting, you were reminded that as per directives given to you during that meeting on September 11, 2015, if you require additional support, you should inform Mr. Picarello. This was reiterated by Janet Weisel on the afternoon of September 11, 2015 when you complained that an aide did not assist you adequately when transitioning a student through the hall. When asked if you had reported this to Mr. Picarello as instructed, you acknowledged that you did not. You were again directed to communicate with Mr. Picarello regarding any future concerns. If you require further accommodations, you were also told to contact Selma Shelton, Assistant Director of Human Resources.

In summary, you are reminded to contact an administrator immediately if you feel as though you need additional support to effectively transition students to and from therapy session or provide service. As discussed, you have been provided with the BIPs for the three students on your current RKS caseload. You are directed to read and follow the BIPs. If additional BIPs are needed in the future, you will need to obtain copies of them. You are instructed to speak to the teachers for each of your students to familiarize yourself with any informal behavior plans for your students. Specific information regarding each student's learning style, behaviors, and instructional needs is available in each student's classroom binder, which you are reminded to review. If your caseload changes in the future, it is your responsibility to obtain the student's formal BIP or informal behavior plan. If you have questions regarding daily procedures or protocols, you must make sure that you access your previously assigned mentor. You have a mentor assigned to you in RKS and a mentor in CCA. If you have other questions, you are directed to speak to Ms. Weisel, Mr. Picarello or Ms. Heller.

As per your request, you will be observed providing occupational therapy services to an RKS student on Tuesday, October 6th, at 11:15 a.m.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require additional clarification.

Sincerely,



Bonnie L. Heller

Principal

Cc: S. Shelton, C. Scerra, B. Longo, J. Weisel, J. Picarello, R. Dreaper, Personnel file